

## Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

Saturday, September 17, 1938

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "A HOME FOR THE COMMUNITY." Information from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Publication offered: "Community Buildings for Farm Families." Farmers' Bulletin No. 1804.

--ooOoo--

When neighbors work or play together, they aren't so likely to have quarrels or hold grudges--and the whole neighborhood is happier. That's what modern psychologists say. But long before the psychologists, many a good neighbor knew it from experience with quilting bees and log sawings, or square dances and church socials.

Today many communities not only have get-togethers for work and play, but they have a home for their get-togethers--a building owned and used by the whole community. Rural communities need such buildings particularly because farm families are scattered and need a central place to gather and discuss community affairs or hold club meetings, dinners, dances, plays and so on. Farm families now manage their gatherings in various ways. Sometimes they use the school or the church or the library; sometimes they use a Grange hall or 4-H or home bureau clubhouse. But many families still have no meeting place and need one.

Recently Miss Blanche Halbert, who has for years been aiding people with housing problems, investigated rural community houses in the different States. She found that community buildings designed for many purposes are increasing, probably because they care for community needs best at the least cost. One large building is more economical than a number of small ones, saves auditorium and stage space, kitchen and dining space, heating, plumbing, lighting, and so on. A many-purpose building also saves in the construction of the roof and foundation as well as the building site. Even better, it brings a number of groups together. It can be made the most serviceable and outstanding building in the community--the people's own building. And if the architecture suits its use and its surroundings, it may easily be a community beauty spot.

Among the community buildings which Miss Halbert found successfully serving farm families is one at Fort Stockton, Pecos County, Texas. This attractive building of native stone is as useful as it is good-looking. Right now it is filled with farm housewives canning together in its convenient kitchen. Later in the fall farm husbands and wives will be smoking home-butchered meats in its smoke-houses and making soap and rendering lard over its outdoor gas-heaters. The building includes office space for the home demonstration agent, an assembly hall with a stage for community theatricals, a work porch, canning kitchen and storage room. The land for the building was a gift and is large enough to allow for a 5-acre playground. The building is of native stone and cost 10 thousand dollars.



9/17/38

At Pittsville, Wisconsin, a community of 500 people with a large surrounding farm population, is another many-use community building, just recently built which provides a meeting place of the city council, file and record room, stage and rooms for dramatics, a motion-picture projection booth, meeting rooms, space for athletics and social functions, and rest rooms. Unfortunately it has no kitchen or dining room. This building is of brick and hollow tile and cost around 30 thousand dollars.

But community buildings do not have to be large and costly to be successful and have many uses. At Darlington, Florida, is a small community house built in 1935 of logs. It cost only 15 hundred dollars, yet is used by the women's clubs, 4-H clubs, the health clinic, community sings, prayer meetings and a great many social activities including weddings.

Another community house built of logs is in Lincoln County, Missouri, in a community of 200 people. It was sponsored by a club of only 10 members but now serves as a meeting place for the town board, civic groups, church and school organizations, the home economics club, community sings, holiday festivals, and other social meetings. It also has a library open 2 days a week. The cash outlay for this house was only 205 dollars--85 dollars for materials and 120 dollars for labor. Other materials and labor, valued at about 200 dollars, were donated.

Some of the least expensive buildings are used the most and have made their communities most proud. When farm families want such a house and pay for it dollar by dollar, often doing most of the building with their own hands, they enjoy using it. Some buildings have been completed through an earn-as-you-go program, going on year after year, with each small sum used to make the house more comfortable and beautiful.

The Eleven Points Community House at Riverton, Missouri, is an example. The community is 5 miles from a church and 14 miles from the nearest town. The Eleven Points Club saw the need for a church and community building. During 1934 the club raised only 89 dollars but they began work on the building. The land was given, the cornerstones laid, and labor and some materials given. In 1935 they had a native stone building 28 by 40 feet in size, where they had church and Sunday school each week, many social gatherings, and a singing school and 4-H Clubs organized especially to meet there.

Up in Belknap County, New Hampshire, in a locality where there were only a few families, the neighbors built a community house on practically no money. They decided to built it one evening and started work the morning after. The lot was donated; the school board gave an abandoned furnace; the maple flooring came from a local maple grove; and the pine for the walls was given by woodlot owners. Much of the labor was volunteered. The building has an auditorium and stage on the first floor and a dining room and kitchen in the basement.

These are just a few glimpses of community houses in various parts of the country--only the barest beginning of the whole community house story. But if you want to know more, Miss Halbert's new bulletin will tell you. The new bulletin is called "Community Buildings for Farm Families." It is Farmers' Bulletin No. 1804 and a postcard to the Department of Agriculture in Washington, D. C., will bring you a copy.

#####



